

CITY OF MESA
HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD (HRAB)
Disabilities Action Team (DAT)
February 16, 2016 Minutes

The Disabilities Action Team of the City of Mesa met on February 16, 2016
at 5:45pm at the Mesa City Plaza, 20 E. Main St. Ste. 170.

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT</u>	<u>MEMBERS ABSENT</u>	<u>STAFF PRESENT</u>	<u>GUESTS</u>
LuAnn Schmidt- Chair Cheryl Anderson Colleen Byron Mark Tompert	Denise Heap-Vice Chair	Bethany Freeland Ruth Giese Jodi Sorrell	

1. Call to Order.

Ms. Schmidt called the meeting to order at 5:45pm.

2. Items from citizens present.*

There were no citizens who requested to speak to DAT.

3. Approval of minutes from the January 19, 2016 DAT meeting.

Mr. Tompert made a motion to approve the January 19, 2016 DAT meeting minutes, Ms. Anderson seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Hear a presentation on the monitoring of transportation services for people with disabilities including reviewing a quarterly report and annual report on East Valley Dial-A-Ride.

Ms. Sorrell gave the committee a brief update on the source of funding for the Dial-A-Ride program. She stated that they are estimated to provide 131,000 trips this year. She stated that the number of trips have been increasing by 10% to 12% per year. Transportation is also starting the procurement of services from the vendor. Dial-A-Ride is meant to be a multiple rider service, but they have notice a single rider trend. Individuals are requesting wheelchair accessible vehicles when they don't have a wheelchair in order to receive a bigger vehicle that is easier to get in and out of. Every wheelchair trip has an extra \$15 sur charge added to it. One of the statistics that has shown a change has been the miles of the average trip. I has gone down this year to 8.5 miles, as opposed to 9.5 from previous years. One of the possible agreements may be that the cabs are sent for trips under five miles and sending the shared ride vehicles for trips greater than that. A new regional paratransit study has just completed. This study is done every two years. Some of the recommendations involve call ahead scheduling and eliminating transfers. A transfer happens when a rider is picked up in Mesa and has to ride into Phoenix. The rider is then picked up and then dropped off somewhere on the Mesa/Phoenix border and then must wait for a Phoenix Dial-A-Ride pick-up. If this policy is revised, it will be a shared ride trip. The rider will be picked up and taken directly to their desired location, regardless of whether or not the trip crosses over into Phoenix. This will be a shared ride trip, so other stops will still be made, thus adding to the ride time, although it should be shorter than the previous transfer trips. Ms. Schmidt stated that on occasion the drivers will take advantage of individuals with disabilities by taking longer routes to certain destinations. Ms. Sorrell stated that with more shared trips, hopefully, that issue will no longer be a factor. She also urged that they would like to move the focus of the Ride Choice program from a back-up to Dial-A-Ride to its own active program. Dr. Byron inquired if the plan is to roll out some sort of public information so that residents are aware of the change. Ms. Sorrell indicated that there will be another marketing campaign once the changes take place and the financials are understood. She also informed the committee that they are researching different pricing structures than the one that is currently used. She

stressed that it is of the utmost importance that all transit riders are treated fairly. Ms. Schmidt explained that she has developed some anxieties regarding transfers and is excited about the possibility that they may not be viable anymore. She also stated that she has made a complaint to Valley Metro about employing a Disabilities Advocate and the complaint has thus far gone unheeded. Ms. Sorrell explained that, in the past, a Dial-A-Ride employee was involved in an accident and was rendered unable to work and Valley Metro never filled that position. Fixing this issue is in the proposed future budget.

5. Hear an update, discuss, and take action on the following items:

(5a) Organize a meeting and presentation regarding individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues to the Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Anderson stated that she knows that Ms. Heap sent an email to Sally at the Chamber of Commerce requesting that the Committee be allowed to speak there and that she is still awaiting a response. Ms. Schmidt suggested that the Committee send a reminder to Ms. Heap to give an update as soon as she is able to. Ms. Giese stated that it was acceptable for Ms. Anderson to reach out to the Chamber on behalf of Ms. Heap and the HRAB. Mr. Anderson stated that she would do that.

(5b) Collect information and recommendations about ways to support the availability of services and programs for people with disabilities and the implementation of the ADA.

Ms. Giese wanted to discuss the officer involved shooting of the transgendered individual in Mesa last week. She informed the committee that Chief Mesa announced that he is going to organize a task force in order to help him identify better ways of training officers on mental health issues. Dr. Byron stated that Ms. Heap had contacted Mr. Villa and requested that the topic be discussed in further detail at the upcoming full Board meeting.

6. Scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.

Ms. Anderson requested that the agenda item discussing the City's Anti-Discrimination Ordinance be placed back on the regular Board agenda.

- Next DAT meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 15, 2016 at 5:45pm.

7. The meeting adjourned at 6:25pm.

Submitted By:



Ruth Giese,
Diversity Program Administrator